

ARE THERE DANGEROUS STRANGERS ON YOUR PROPERTY?

There probably are! They're called noxious weeds. Noxious weeds are the most dangerous threat facing Colorado's natural areas. Noxious weeds can easily spread from your property to public lands. It is your responsibility to remove noxious weeds from your property.

This brochure will tell you what you need to know about one noxious weed that may be found on or near your property: **MYRTLE SPURGE**.



Photo courtesy of Carol Dawson

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON NOXIOUS WEEDS, CONTACT THESE AGENCIES:

*City of Boulder:

www.ci.boulder.co.us/environmentalaffairs/ipm/index.html

(303)441-1915

or

www.ci.boulder.co.us/openspace/nature/weeds.htm

*Colorado Weed Management
Association:

www.cwma.org

*Colorado Department of
Agriculture:

www.ag.state.co.us/dpi

*Colorado State University
Cooperative Extension:

www.coopext.colostate.edu/boulder



Conservation Team

3198 N. Broadway
Boulder, CO 80304

Myrtle Spurge – What You Need to Know!

Neighborhood Watch



Photo courtesy of Toshiko Gunter

Myrtle Spurge
Euphorbia myrsinites

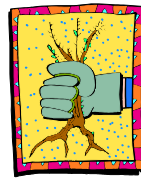
Also known as:
Creeping Spurge
Donkey Tail (Spurge)

WHY ARE NOXIOUS WEEDS SO DANGEROUS?

Noxious weeds are plants that are not native to Colorado and are mandated by law to be controlled. They have no natural enemies here to control their populations. Their seeds are easily spread by wind, water, tires, clothing, plus domestic and wild animals. Once noxious weeds become established in a natural area, they crowd out surrounding native plants by stealing precious moisture, nutrients, and sunlight. This change in the plant community harms the local wildlife community. Without the native plants they depend on, native wildlife numbers can drop drastically in weed-infested areas.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Myrtle spurge is an ornamental that some people once planted in their yards. It is a perennial that produces new stems from the taproot each year. The plants are 4 to 6 inches tall, have trailing stems, and fleshy, blue-green, triangle-shaped leaves. In the spring they produce clusters of small yellow flowers on top of each stem.



Myrtle spurge is not only dangerous to native plants and wildlife, **it is dangerous to you and your family.** The most common victims of myrtle spurge are children who unassumingly pick the pretty flowers. Myrtle spurge produces a toxic, milky latex which **causes severe blister-like burns if it touches your skin.** If it gets in your eyes, seek medical attention!

Myrtle spurge has been found in many neighborhoods. Public land agencies are removing myrtle spurge from their properties and require you to do the same.

IT'S AGAINST THE LAW

The Colorado Noxious Weed Act, §§ 35-5.5-101 – 119. C.R.S. (2003), designates myrtle spurge as a Class A Noxious Weed that must be eradicated. It is a violation of this law to allow myrtle spurge to “produce seed or develop other reproductive propagules.” To read the complete act, visit:

www.ag.state.co.us .

HOW CAN YOU COMPLY WITH THE LAW?

*Remove myrtle spurge by digging up mature plants and pulling new seedlings.

*To protect yourself from the toxic sap, wear gloves, long sleeves, pants, and eye protection when handling this plant.

*If the plants are in flower, bag them carefully and put in the trash or take to a solid waste landfill.

Do not compost!

*Do not buy or plant myrtle spurge. It is illegal to sell it in Colorado.

*If you see myrtle spurge on public or private lands, report it to the proper landowner or agency.



Photo courtesy of the City of Boulder OSMP Dept.